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DC State Board of Education Public Hearing
on proposed revisions to the Accountability Workbook

March 24, 2010

Thank you for this opportunity to speak tonight. I'm here in support of Amendment 14 of the proposed Amendments to the Consolidated State Accountability Workbook. If passed, this amendment will allow our LEA to count students exited from special education toward our scores for AYP in our disabilities subgroup for two years. Our LEA currently has a high population of ELL students, approximately 60% of our student body. When these students exit our ELL program, we are able to count their scores toward our ELL subgroup for AYP. Why not do the same for Special education students? It is my belief that allowing exited special education students' scores count toward AYP for the disabilities subgroup will have only positive outcomes for LEAs and children. Specifically:

1. LEAs will, by design, be forced to look at those student's scores more closely. This creates an additional opportunity for schools to monitor those students and make sure that they continue to be successful without the supports of special education services.
2. This is also an incentive for schools to exit students with disabilities who are academically proficient. Our goal is to support students until they graduate or able to achieve without special education and it makes sense to incentivize exiting students from special education.

Our LEA has a student who has made great progress and is on a path to exit special education by next year. It is in the best interest of our LEA and the State to allow us to count this student's proficient and advanced DC-CAS scores toward the subgroup he was a part of for the past few years. Much hard work has gone into preparing this student to be successful without special education supports. This amendment will allow our school to reap the benefits of that hard work and count his scores for the next two years. Counting these scores will undoubtedly help us meet AYP for our disabilities subgroup, which has been a challenge for many schools.